

Today's News - Wednesday, March 4, 2009

- Weinstein's Words That Build Tip #12: How to take advantage of otherwise annoying interruptions.
- BREEAM, LEED, and Green Star hope to play nice to come up with new global standard for carbon emissions to measure the environmental impact of buildings.
- The greening of the prison-industrial complex.
- Saffron x 2: a cheer for Philadelphia's mayor moving forward with waterfront plans; and a thumbs-up (with some reservations) on plans to improve Philly's Dilworth Plaza and upgrade the transit concourse below.
- A big cheer for Calgary's plans to build Calatrava-designed pedestrian bridges: it would "signify an 'urban maturity' and desire to exist in a well-designed city" (and \$25 million well-spent).
- Calys's take on new Presidio museum design and the "unexpected twist" that leaves opponents stunned.
- A "disposable" building for U.N.'s art collection while HQ undergoes major revamp.
- Woodman x 2 re: the "wave of optimism" splashing along some of Britain's seashores, especially Folkestone and its "stunning new arts building" (2nd report includes building review and lots of pix).
- Hawthorne's video interview with Gehry, and how fish forms became part of his formal repertoire.
- Kaplicky's "octopus" may not be dead in the water. - Prague Mayor criticizes book about Kaplicky's "blob" (even though he hasn't actually read it).
- Huge Hollywood ambitions rising in Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- History in ruins as Cologne's historical archive (dating back to 922) inexplicably collapses; historians "hope something can be salvaged, but the future of the city's past is grim."
- Luxury piano maker finds a way around the economic crisis: moves into furniture-making mode.
- Questions arise re: authenticity of recently-auctioned (for \$72,000) Empire State massing model.

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WORDS THAT BUILD: Taking Advantage of Interruptions in Architectural Communication: Tip #12: Cogent communicators exploit opportunities offered by interruptions. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow

BREEAM, LEED and Green Star to work together on new global standard: Common metrics on carbon emissions will be developed...to measure the environmental impact of buildings. - Building (UK)

Greening the Prison-Industrial Complex: ...several states are busy rethinking the old concrete-box approach to prisons — home to more than two million Americans — and high on the agenda are energy efficiency and other "green" upgrades. -- Ricci Greene Associates; Raphael Sperry/Prison Design Boycott Campaign- New York Times

Mayor Nutter proceeds with waterfront plan: Despite severe budget cutbacks...he will authorize \$2 million worth of planning and design work for a recreation trail along the Delaware River, a new park at Pier 11, and a formal master plan for the central waterfront...trying to maintain the momentum for the development sequence outlined last year in PennPraxis' Action Plan... By Inga Saffron- Philadelphia Inquirer

A plan for dreary Dilworth: The mid-1970s design of Dilworth Plaza by Vincent Kling was a pompous, overblown and hugely expensive affair...A new design...could revolutionize the way we think about Philadelphia's dreary 9-to-5 municipal quarter...needs much more thought and refinement...may have too much activity and the wrong kind of architecture. By Inga Saffron -- KieranTimberlake; Olin [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Bridging the gap in pedestrian transit: If high-end design can uplift Calgary's spectre of architecture, and include measures of transit infrastructure...especially the Santiago Calatrava-commissioned foot bridges to gap the Bow...signify an "urban maturity" and desire to exist in a well-designed city. - Metro News Calgary (Canada)

No walk in the park: a new design for CAMP: ...a much-awaited new design for the Contemporary Art Museum of the Presidio...shows a diminished and deemphasized building...unexpected twist is that the new building sits in the same spot as the earlier design...opponents are stunned. By George Calys -- Gluckman Mayner Architects; WRNS Studio [slide show]- San Francisco Examiner

UN art collection to go on show in \$150m "disposable" building: As the United Nations complex in New York undergoes a \$1.9bn renovation, the international body's extensive, eclectic art collection is to go on view in a temporary structure to accommodate the UN during the makeover process. -- HLW Architects- The Art Newspaper (UK)

Folkestone: wave of optimism at the seaside: The revitalisation...includes plans for the ambitious development of the harbour and a stunning new arts building...Another major source of hope is offered by the planned launch of a high-speed rail link...isn't alone in hoping to capitalise on the potential bonanza. By Ellis Woodman -- Norman Foster; Alison Brooks; David Chipperfield; Niall McLaughlin [images, links]- Telegraph (UK)

Alison Brooks' folk art for Folkestone: Quarterhouse, a performing arts venue and studio space in Kent is the advance guard of the town's rebirth. By Ellis Woodman [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Video: Frank Gehry and the fish: Aside from allowing him to break free of the literal historicism of postmodern architects, adding the fish to his formal repertoire also marked the beginning of his exploration of curved surfaces. By Christopher Hawthorne [images, video]- Los Angeles Times

Prague: will architect's death mean new life for 'Octopus' library? Critics say it looks like "frog spit" and the Czech president vowed to block the project "with his own body", but all that may now change with the sudden death of radical Czech architect Jan Kaplicky. -- Future Systems- AFP

Prague Mayor criticises book about Kaplicky's "blob": Vlastimil Jezek's "Fragments of the Octopus"...Mayor Pavel Bem...admitted he had not read the whole book.....Eva Jiricna who chaired the jury of the contest...expressed hopes that a young generation would complete the project. -- Future Systems- Prague Daily Monitor

Hollywood ambitions rising in Chiang Mai: B8bn (US\$220 million) venture will build big movie town: CKA Chiang Mai Co...believes "Lannawood" will be able to surpass Hong Kong as the hub of the movie industry in Asia. -- Creative Kingdom- Bangkok Post

History in Ruins: The collapse of the Historical Archive of Cologne on Tuesday buried more than a millennium's worth of documents under tons of rubble. Archivists and historians hope something can be salvaged, but the future of the city's past is grim. [slide show]- Der Spiegel (Germany)

Luxury Czech piano maker Petrof turns to furniture in global economic crisis: ...hit the soft pedal and switch production from grands to lacquered kitchen furniture...boasting elaborate designs and a lacquered finish characteristic of grand pianos. -

Telegraph (UK)

Empire of Doubt: Authenticity of \$72,000 Empire State massing model questioned: ...Robert W. Jones, a former partner of the building's design firm, Shreve Lamb & Harmon, claims he built the model in 1972. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Op-Ed: Life After Ada: Reassessing the Utility of Architectural Criticism: Ada Louise Huxtable deserves mucho thanks and praise - but other questions moving us to a new flavor of criticism have to be asked. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow



-- Saucier + Perrotte Architectes: Scandinave Les Bains, Vieux-Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada
-- Book: "Limited Edition: Prototypes, One-Offs and Design Art Furniture" by Sophie Lavell

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